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July 27, 2007

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley *tn*
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – LIFECIRCLE
UNLIMITED, INCORPORATED - LIFECIRCLE UNLIMITED GROUP
HOME**

We have completed a review of Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Lifecircle Unlimited, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home was providing services for six DCFS children.

Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home is located in the Fifth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home needs to replace the living room and office carpet, stove knobs, and a bed pillow. The Group Home also needs to include input from all members of the treatment team and the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans and maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications. In addition, the Group Home needs to provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance, a sufficient quantity of clothes, and the required minimum weekly allowance.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

JTM:DC:CC:dl

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Susan Kerr, Chief Deputy, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Dr. DeWayne Winrow, PhD., Executive Director, Lifecircle Unlimited
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Lifecircle Unlimited, Incorporated
Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home
11620 Gladstone Avenue
Sylmar, California 91342
Phone: (818) 834-2463
License Number: 198204244
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Lifecircle Unlimited Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

Generally, the interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the carpet in the living room and office is stained and dirty and two kitchen stove burner knobs are missing.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. However, a bed in bedroom three has a flat and dirty pillow. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Lifecircle Unlimited management:

- a. Replace the carpet in the living room and office.**
- b. Replace the stove burner knobs in the kitchen.**

- c. Replace and maintain clean and comfortable pillows for each bed as needed.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive, and include short and long term goals. However, input from all members of the treatment team and the child are not included in the development or implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

2. Lifecircle Unlimited management include input from all members of the treatment team and the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, the Group Home does not maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

- 3. Lifecircle Unlimited management maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.**

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. Children also report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding.

Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

Sample size: Two

Comments:

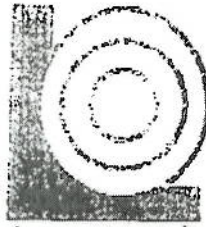
The Group Home provides appropriate clothing and items of necessity. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality. However, children are not provided with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and children do not have a sufficient quantity of clothing. Both children are in need of bathrobes and one child needs a jacket and slippers.

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, all children are not always provided with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

- 4. Lifecircle Unlimited management:**
 - a. Provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.**
 - b. Provide children with additional clothing items as needed.**
 - c. Provide all children with the minimum weekly allowance as required.**



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LIFECIRCLE GROUP HOME

11628 Gladstone Avenue, Lake View Terrace, Ca. 91342. 818-4342463. Lifecircle@aol.com

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN FOR LIFECIRCLE GROUP HOME

I. Facility and Environment

1. Lifecircle Unlimited Management:

a. Replace the Carpet in the Living Room and Office.

On 5/27/07, Mamie Nelson requested new carpeting of Anita Smith, owner of the house. Ms. Smith responded that there are no funds for carpeting at this time. She asked Ms. Nelson to look for reasonably priced carpeting.

In the mean time, the living room and office carpeting will be cleaned 1x month. The cleaning was done on 5/23/07. Mamie Nelson will arrange for this monthly cleaning.

b. Replace the Stove Knobs in the Kitchen.

Mamie Nelson replaced the stove knobs on 5/23/07. Staff will use a "Housekeeping List" each morning to check whether appliances are in good repair.

c. Maintain clean and comfortable pillows for each bed.

The pillow for bed in bedroom #3 was replaced on 5/25/07.

Staff will use a "Housekeeping list" each morning to check whether all bedding is in good repair or needs to be replaced.

II. Program Services

2. Include the Treatment Team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

A "Signature Page" has been created for all members of the treatment team and the child to sign after input from all has been received. Loretta Cogan, MFT, Group Home Social Worker, writes the

Needs and Services Plans and will ensure that this procedure is implemented.

V. Psychotropic Medication

3. Lifecircle Unlimited Management maintain current Court Authorizations for all children taking Psychotropic Medications.

The Psychotropic Authorization that was missing has been received. One month before Psychotropic Authorizations are due, they will be requested to give enough time to be received. Loretta Cogan, Group Home Social Worker, will monitor children's charts and Mamie Nelson will request the authorizations.

VII. 4. Lifecircle Unlimited Management:

a. Provide children with the required \$ 50.00 monthly clothing allowance.

Lifecircle has put in place a "Tracking Sheet" where \$ 50.00 per month is set aside for each resident and money spent on clothing is documented. Mamie Nelson and the accounting department are responsible for implementation.

b. Provide sufficient clothing for each child to meet DCFS clothing standards for quantity.

Bathrobes, jacket and slippers were purchased on 5/25/07. An inventory will be taken every two months. Albert Nelson, Office Manager, will be responsible to do the inventory.

c. Provide all children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

All children are now given the required minimum weekly allowance of \$ 5.00 for children 13 and under and \$7.00 for children 14 and above. Mamie Nelson will implement this.



MAMIE NELSON
Director, LIFECIRCLE GROUP HOME



LORETTA COGAN, MFT
Social Worker, LIFECIRCLE
GROUP HOME